influenza vaccinations for the pilgrims. The Haj Committee of India in coordination with the State Haj Committees provides to the pilgrims information regarding confirmation of their seats, travel documents, transportation, accommodation, release of foreign exchange, embarkation points and departure dates etc. For direct Haj flights from India, Varanasi was added as Sixteenth embarkation point in 2007 and Indore has been added as Seventeenth embarkation point for 2008. The Government have taken a number of decisions to streamline the functioning of Private Tour Operators so that they provide proper services and facilities for the pilgrims. The Government provide' adequate funds every year for these requirements. The expenditure incurred by the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) in connection with Haj arrangements and subsidy provided for air transportation for Haj pilgrimage during the last two years is as follows:

Financial Year	Expenditure incurred by MEA	Year	Subsidy (Provisional)
2006-07	Rs.23,35,42,728	Haj 2006-II	Rs. 367 crores
2007-08	Rs.22,82,64,018	Haj 2007	Rs. 387 crores

Grant to Afghanistan

692. SARDAR TARLOCHAN SINGH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the amount of grant that has been given to Afghanistan in last three years;

(b) whether any historic religious place of Hindus, Sikhs and Buddhists have also been given grant for repairs; and

(c) the steps Government takes for the welfare of the Hindus and Sikhs who are left in Afghanistan?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) Government of India have spent Rs.1178.39 crores during the last three years as aid to Afghanistan.

(b) No grant has been provided for repair of religious places in Afghanistan.

(c) The Embassy and the Indian Consulates in Afghanistan take all appropriate measures in this regard and remain in regular touch with local community leaders.

Fishermen in jails of Pakistan

693. SHRI VIJAY KUMAR RUPANI:
SHRI NATUJI HALAJI THAKOR:
SHRI KANJIBHAI PATEL:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to refer to answer to Unstarred Question 3293 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 24th April, 2008 and state:

(a) whether recently Pakistan authorities have released some of the fishermen;

(b) if so, the number of fishermen released, so far;

(c) if so, the number of fishermen belonging to Gujarat released;

(d) the number of fishermen still lodged in Pakistan jails; and